

BUSINESS REPORT

**MONTANA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
61st LEGISLATURE - REGULAR SESSION**

HOUSE JOINT APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE ON EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Date: Friday, January 23, 2009
Place: Capitol

Time: 8:00 am
Room: 152

BILLS and RESOLUTIONS HEARD:

Prefix (HB, HR, HJR, SB, SR, or SJR) and number. Add Postponed (PP) when appropriate:

Agency Budget Overview and Budget Hearing.


MSU Educational Units & Public Service Research Agencies.

EXECUTIVE ACTION TAKEN:

Prefix (HB, HR, HJR, SB, SR, or SJR) and number. Enter P(pass) F(failed) DPAA (do pass as amended) BC(be concurred in) BCAA (be concurred in as amended):

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COMMENTS:



REP. Dan Villa, Chairman

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Roll Call
Subcommittee on Education

DATE: 1/23/2009

| <u>NAME</u> | <u>PRESENT</u> | <u>ABSENT/ EXCUSED</u> |
|------------------------|----------------|----------------------------|
| Sen. Debby Barrett | ✓ | |
| Sen. Bob Hawks | ✓ | |
| Sen. Jim Peterson | ✓ | |
| Rep. Roy Hollandsworth | ✓ | |
| Rep. Cheryl Steenson | | Excused |
| Rep. William Glaser | ✓ | |
| Rep. Dan Villa | ✓ | |
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**Montana House of Representatives
Visitors Register**

EDUCATION SUBCOMMITTEE Date 1/23/09

Bill No. 2 Sponsor(s) _____

PLEASE PRINT

PLEASE PRINT

PLEASE PRINT

| Name and Address | Representing | Support | Oppose | Inf. |
|--------------------|----------------|---------|--------|------|
| | | | | |
| POW. SEXTON | MSU Billings | X | | X |
| Reif Groeth | MSU-Northern | X | | X |
| Jim Petter | MSU-NORRAN | X | | X |
| Sue Ost | MSU-Northern | X | | X |
| Gedf Gamble | MSU | X | | X |
| Chris Christensen | MSU | X | | |
| CHRIS HINDEN | FSTS | X | | |
| Maureen Wileman | ASMSU-Bozeman | ✓ | | |
| Rob Bowersky | ASMSU-Billings | X | | |
| Ashtley Adams | ASMSU-Billings | ✓ | | |
| Heather Wilson | ASMSU-Billings | ✓ | | |
| Emanna Varata | ASMSU-Billings | X | | |
| Jesse SILVERTHORPE | CPI | | | |
| D'Ann Campbell | MSU-Billings | X | | |
| John McDonnell | MSU-Bozeman | X | | X |
| Bill Jones | MSU-Bozeman | X | | |
| BILL MUSE | UM | ✓ | | |
| Teresa Branch | UM | ✓ | | |

Please leave prepared testimony with Secretary. Witness Statement forms are available if you care to submit written testimony.

**Montana House of Representatives
Visitors Register**

EDUCATION SUBCOMMITTEE Date 1/23/09

Bill No. 2 **Sponsor(s)** _____

PLEASE PRINT

PLEASE PRINT

PLEASE PRINT

| Name and Address | Representing | Support | Oppose | Inf. |
|--------------------------|------------------------------------|---------|--------|------|
| Austin Owens | MSU | X | | |
| Ine English | MSU | X | | |
| Sandy Palm-Gibson | MSU | X | | |
| DAN LAKE | MAES | X | | |
| Brett Nedens | MAES | X | | |
| Kurt Kammerzell | MAES | X | | |
| Charlie Preston-Townsend | MSU Bozeman | X | | |
| DARVIN Rensman | MSU-BILLINGS | X | | |
| John Brandry | Stillwater Mining Co. | X | | |
| Gary Lambert | Dept. of Correct | X | | |
| Gary Mayagond | MSU B | X | | |
| Mark Mathison | MSU BF | X | | |
| Mike Foster | UMH/eq/Vol/hol/hope | X | | |
| Don Muddick | MT PBS | | | |
| Dave Kelsey | MSU Extension ^{Multi, MT} | X | | |
| Bing Van Bergen | Montana Grain Growers Ass. | X | | |
| Karen LoBradley | MAES | X | | |
| John Youngberg | MEBF x Co. Coalitions | X | | |
| Nancy Meuli | MSU EXT | X | | |

Please leave prepared testimony with Secretary. Witness Statement forms are available if you care to submit written testimony.

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|----------------|-------------|---------|
| HAROLD BLATTIE | MACB | Support |
| Don Herzog | mppc | Support |
| LANCE JUDENMAN | | SUPPORT |
| Bruce Charles | Westminster | Support |

***Budget Hearing for HB 2
House Joint Appropriations Subcommittee on Education
Montana Agricultural Experiment Station (MAES)
and Extension Service (ES)***

***Testimony submitted by Bing Von Bergen, President
Montana Grain Growers Association***

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, my name is Bing Von Bergen and I am president of the Montana Grain Growers Association and a grain producer from Moccasin. The Montana Grain Growers Association strongly encourages you to fully fund our Ag Experiment Stations (AES) and the Montana State University Extension Service (MAES). These agencies are a valuable conduit between our university system and the people of Montana. More specifically, they serve a vital role in delivering ag research and knowledge from the College of Agriculture to our farmers and ranchers across the state. Cuts to the baseline budget funding required by MAES will greatly hurt the agricultural industry.

Agriculture is the number one industry in the state of Montana, contributing well over 2.5 billion dollars to Montana's economy every year, and we rely heavily on research from MSU to compete in the world market. Over the past few years, agricultural input costs have increased dramatically. A recent cost of production analysis shows that one area producer on an average size farming operation spent \$27,000 for fertilizer alone in 2002; \$62,000 in 2005; and over \$150,000 for the 2008 crop year. Our profitability is at stake. Whether it is plant diseases, insect problems, better yielding varieties or a host of other issues, MAES works to ensure all research priorities intersect to make agriculturists in the state more profitable and competitive. This research benefits all who are involved in Montana agriculture, including large and small farms and ranches and traditional and organic production methods.

The geography and weather of Montana, by definition a high plains desert area with limited irrigation, dictates that agriculture here faces challenges different from those in other regions. Because of these differences, research from other states doesn't necessarily transfer over to agriculture in Montana. It is imperative that Montana research programs are fully funded to continue improving agricultural issues specific to our state.

Farming is a continually changing and progressive industry. Production agriculture deals with problems today that did not exist in Montana as recently as ten years ago. Montana specific research must continue to improve and change with the changing environment so agriculture in our state is not passed up by those competitors who have chosen to continue their investment in agriculture.

Our experiment stations and extension service are currently short staffed and important positions are going unfilled. With increasing demand for research in our farming industry, it is extremely important that we have access to the kind of unbiased data that our experiment stations and extension service provides. MSU is our land grant university and the land for the experiment stations was donated by people who realized the importance of agricultural research. Thank you for the work you do on behalf of agriculture in Montana and please continue this work by fully funding MAES.